

DANIELS CANYON

One of the highest and most scenic spots in Wasatch County is Daniels Canyon, which rises to a height of some 8,000 feet. It was first developed by settlers in the valley who sought summer range lands for their livestock. It was also a popular spot from which settlers took timber to build their homes and other buildings.

Through the canyon, which has very narrow, high, rugged sides, runs a stream of crystal clear water. The canyon sides are covered with grass, shrubs, mahogany, scrub oak and maple trees, quaken aspens and many varieties of pine and fir trees along with service berries, elder berries and choke cherries.

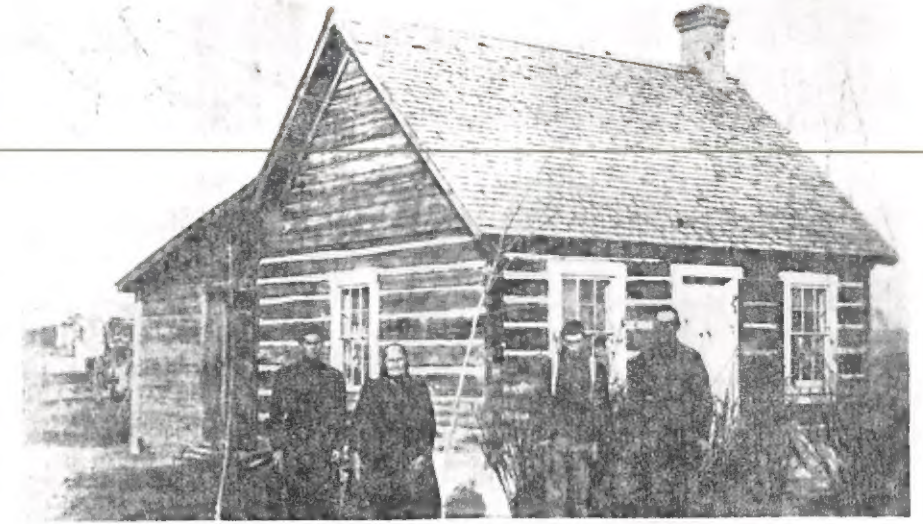
Hyrum Oaks was one of the first settlers of Provo Valley to take up ground at the mouth of Daniels Canyon. Tom Brown, a relative of

THE "OTHER FACES" OF WASATCH

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Mr. Oaks, also built a home in the creek bottoms. Mr. Oaks went through the canyon into the Strawberry Valley to cut wild hay for his stock, and then in 1879, with the help of William Bethers, surveyed a canal at the north end of Strawberry Valley to bring water over into Daniels Canyon. Mr. Oaks also operated a sawmill in the canyon. Just above the Oaks home lived Joe Jacobs and Jim Ivie. Others who lived in the canyon included Ben Bromley, Eli Gordon, Swen Bjorkman, Ab Shelton, Bob and Liza Winterton, Giles and John Winterton. Some who operated sawmills or had other interests in the canyon included William Bethers, the Cleggs, the Parkers, Cory Hanks, John Turner, Patrick McQuire, the Alexanders and the Noakes, the Formans and Charles E. Thacker.

In 1896 a flurry of railroad development occurred in the canyon. The "Wasatch Wave" of August 14, 1896 reported the following:



The old Hyrum Oaks home built on his homestead farm at the mouth of Daniels Canyon.

"The corps of the Rio Grande Western surveyors who have been running a line through Daniels Canyon for the past month, commencing at the summit this side of Strawberry Valley, are down to the mouth of the canyon and will soon have the works completed to Heber. As has been previously stated in these columns, the main line of the new railroad will run through Daniels Canyon and tap the reservation country and Colorado points, thus making Heber the central point in this valley and from where a branch line will be run over to Park City."

Like so many other plans of the day, this railroad "dream" never materialized. However, a narrow, twisting trail through the canyon became in later years part of a transcontinental highway system. The trail crossed the canyon stream by fording shallow plates. At one time a group of photographers were enroute to Vernal for some work with a ten-foot-wide house on wheels. They hired David Thacker to haul the outfit by team, and in order to make any distance he had to stop every few miles and chop out the willows through the canyon.

With the development of U.S. Highway 40, the Daniels Canyon trail became a vital part of the highway. Cattle and sheep are trucked over the road to their summer ranges and hundreds of thousands of tourists use the highway every year. The view from Daniels Canyon into Provo Valley is an awe inspiring sight and provides a fine introduction to the valley for those coming from the east.

In recent years the U.S. Forest Service has established a recreational spot, the Lodge-Pole Camp in the canyon and has also a park near Whiskey Springs, where travelers can refresh themselves with clear, sparkling spring water.